

FIRE PREVENTION PLANNING CONCEPTS

9003

(No. 4, March 1991)

CDF bases its fire prevention planning process on ignition management and loss reduction. Ignition management involves preventing fires that exceed the capabilities of the initial attack forces and could result in large damaging fires. Loss reduction aims to reduce hazards (fuels around structures and communities) and to implement fire safe practices for residential developments in the CDF jurisdiction. Successful ignition management and loss reduction allows CDF's initial attack forces to concentrate on immediate perimeter control instead of structural fire protection.

The fire prevention planning process deals with nontraditional concepts. The geographic boundaries generated during the planning process do not necessarily correspond with ranger district boundaries because the planning process addresses the unit in total with input from the ranger districts. Management needs to make decisions during the planning process regarding use of resources---fire control and fire prevention personnel and equipment--across district boundaries as well as the allocation of funds, time, material, and other equipment on a unit-wide basis.

Methodology used to accomplish the fire prevention objective combines traditional fire prevention components--information/education, engineering, enforcement, and volunteerism--with an array of ignition management activities. The combination of ignition management activities and traditional fire prevention components are categorized into the following program areas.

INDIRECT PROGRAMS

9003.1

(No. 4, March 1991)

CDF uses indirect programs to influence public attitudes and opinions--not specific behavior--towards wildfire occurrence. These educational programs are important because they open the door for further learning. Examples of this program are Smokey and the Pros; mass media; Ad Council; fairs; parades; and poster contests.

MANDATED PROGRAMS

9003.2

(No. 4, March 1991)

Mandated programs are activities mandated by law or department/agency policy. Examples include burning permit administration, fire investigations, cost recovery, law enforcement, and hazard reduction inspections.

MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS

9003.3

(No. 4, March 1991)

Maintenance programs protect long-term fire prevention investments and must be considered when assembling the unit fire prevention plan. Examples of these activities include inter-agency contacts/agreements, railroad inspections, powerline inspections, inspections aimed at industrial operations, team teaching programs, and structure and premise inspections.

TARGETED PROGRAMS

9003.4

(No. 4, March 1991)

Targeted programs deal directly with on-the-ground ignition problems that pose unacceptable loss potential. These activities require difficult decisions concerning use of unit resources. The fire prevention planning process, outlined in this chapter, addresses this issue. Once specific ignition problems are identified and targeted, specific mitigation measures might include on-site inspections prior to permit issuance, in-depth arson investigations, high visibility patrols, and inspections of ignition-prone railroad/powerline right-of-ways.

LOSS REDUCTION

9003.5

(No. 4, March 1991)

Loss reduction activities aim to reduce losses and to increase suppression capabilities after ignition. This program requires long-term commitment of unit resources with frequent progress review. Examples of these activities include on-going residential hazard reduction inspections, fuel modification areas/lines between existing developments and highly flammable forest fuels, fire safe/land use planning activities aimed at incorporating minimum fire safety standards into any new development occurring in the SRA within the unit, and vegetation management projects aimed at reducing forest fuel build-up, establishing future control lines, and enhancing access for fire fighting equipment.

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[\(see next section\)](#)

[\(see Table of Contents\)](#)